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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/715,793	11/18/2003	John Lowell Southard II	SCD 03-34	4547

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EXAMINER

RABAGO, ROBERTO

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1713

DATE MAILED: 03/27/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/715,793

Applicant(s)

SOUTHARD ET AL.

Examiner

Roberto Rábago

Art Unit

1713

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 January 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-52 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-8, 12-22, 26-34 and 38-49 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 9-11, 23-25, 35-37 and 50-52 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 5/19/05.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. Applicant's election with traverse of group II, claims 9-11, 23-25, 35-37 and 50-52, in the reply filed on 1/6/2006 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the claims could not be made by any other process because since the claims are drafted as product-by-process, any infringing product must necessarily have been made by the stated process. This is not found persuasive because applicants' statement with regard to the scope of product-by-process claims is incorrect. MPEP 2113 states in part:

PRODUCT-BY-PROCESS CLAIMS ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE MANIPULATIONS OF THE RECITED STEPS, ONLY THE STRUCTURE IMPLIED BY THE STEPS

"[E]ven though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process." In re Thorpe, 777 F.2d 695, 698, 227 USPQ 964, 966 (Fed. Cir. 1985).

Accordingly, the product is not limited by the stated process other than the extent to which the process confers physical structure to the product. The claimed resin contains no specific physical properties, and therefore the scope of resins covered by the claims is vast, particularly in view of the broad scope of components specified in the process claims, and furthermore because the process claims are entirely open-ended. Across such broad scope, there is nothing on this record which would lead the ordinary skilled worker to conclude that any deviation from the specified process steps would render the product outside the scope of the claims. For example, the process requires

Art Unit: 1713

a process temperature of about 240°C to about 290°C. However, there is no reason to believe that a resin obtained using a process which operates at a temperature at least infinitesimally outside of the claimed range would be any different from a product obtained using a process which operates at a temperature at least infinitesimally inside this range. Therefore, it repeated that the claimed resin could be made by another process.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Information Disclosure Statement

2. The information disclosure statement filed 5/19/2005 fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(3) because it does not include a concise explanation of the relevance, as it is presently understood by the individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) most knowledgeable about the content of the information, of each patent listed that is not in the English language. It has been placed in the application file, but the lined-through references referred to therein have not been considered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102/103

3. Claims 9-11, 23-25, 35-37 and 50-52 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Bender et al. (EP 816 392).

The reference describes a modified polymer for use as a component of a printing ink (abstract). The polymer is disclosed as comprising cyclopentadiene (col. 2, last

Art Unit: 1713

paragraph), with a treatment component comprising an aromatic carboxylic acid (col. 3, lines 23-24) at a temperature within the range of 100°C - 300°C (col. 3, lines 34-35), also optionally including phenols (col. 7, line 21) and acid catalysts (col. 7, lines 29-30), in specific relative amounts (col. 5, lines 6-18). Examples 6 and 7 disclose a process of making a treated cyclopentadiene resin with benzoic acid (Example 7 further comprising a phenol), in substantially the same manner as recited in the process portion of the product-by-process claims, and therefore the products thereof anticipate the instant claims. Regarding varnish, the cited examples are a varnish because they include the treated resin in hydrocarbon solvent as claimed. Regarding ink, although the reference does not appear to have made an ink using the cited example resins, one of ordinary skill in the art would immediately envisage an ink comprising said resin because the primary application disclosed in the reference disclosure is a binder for ink compositions. In the event that any differences can be shown for the product of the instant product-by-process claims, as opposed to the product taught by the cited reference, such differences would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art as a routine modification of the product in the absence of a showing of unexpected results. The following is noted with respect to claims drafted as product-by-process (MPEP 2113):

ONCE A PRODUCT APPEARING TO BE SUBSTANTIALLY IDENTICAL IS FOUND AND A 35 U.S.C. 102 /103 REJECTION MADE, THE BURDEN SHIFTS TO THE APPLICANT TO SHOW AN UNOBVIOUS DIFFERENCE

"The Patent Office bears a lesser burden of proof in making out a case of prima facie obviousness for product-by-process claims because of their peculiar nature" than when a product is claimed in the conventional fashion. In re Fessmann, 489 F.2d 742, 744, 180 USPQ 324, 326 (CCPA 1974). Once the examiner provides a rationale tending to show that the claimed product appears to be the same or similar to that of the prior art, although produced by a different process, the burden shifts to applicant to come forward

Art Unit: 1713

with evidence establishing an unobvious difference between the claimed product and the prior art product. In re Marosi, 710 F.2d 798, 802, 218 USPQ 289, 292 (Fed. Cir. 1983).

THE USE OF 35 U.S.C. 102 /103 REJECTIONS FOR PRODUCT-BY-PROCESS CLAIMS HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE COURTS

"[T]he lack of physical description in a product-by-process claim makes determination of the patentability of the claim more difficult, since in spite of the fact that the claim may recite only process limitations, it is the patentability of the product claimed and not of the recited process steps which must be established. We are therefore of the opinion that when the prior art discloses a product which reasonably appears to be either identical with or only slightly different than a product claimed in a product-by-process claim, a rejection based alternatively on either section 102 or section 103 of the statute is eminently fair and acceptable. As a practical matter, the Patent Office is not equipped to manufacture products by the myriad of processes put before it and then obtain prior art products and make physical comparisons therewith." In re Brown, 459 F.2d 531, 535, 173 USPQ 685, 688 (CCPA 1972).

PRODUCT-BY-PROCESS CLAIMS ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE MANIPULATIONS OF THE RECITED STEPS, ONLY THE STRUCTURE IMPLIED BY THE STEPS

"[E]ven though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process." In re Thorpe, 777 F.2d 695, 698, 227 USPQ 964, 966 (Fed. Cir. 1985).

4. Claims 9-11, 23-25, 35-37 and 50-52 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over GB 1535107.

The reference discloses in Example 7 a process for treating a cyclopentadiene resin comprising heating to 260°C in the presence of benzoic acid and an alkyl phenol, and is substantially the same as the process portion of the product-by-process claims, and therefore the product thereof anticipates the instant claims. The example further discloses the modified resin in toluene with pigment. Regarding the use of a catalyst,

Art Unit: 1713

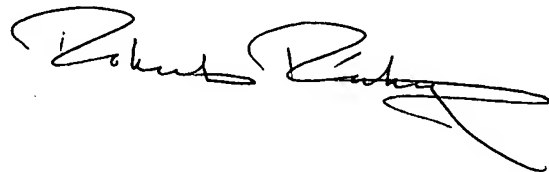
the reference recommends this component as an accelerant at pg. 2, col. 1, lines 5-10, but is stated to be not necessary. In the event that any differences can be shown for the product of the instant product-by-process claims, as opposed to the product taught by the cited reference, such differences would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art as a routine modification of the product in the absence of a showing of unexpected results.

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Roberto Rábago whose telephone number is (571) 272-1109. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday from 8:00 - 4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Wu can be reached on (571) 272-1114. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Roberto Rábago
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1713



March 17, 2006